

BEFORE THE SOUTH CAROLINA STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION

In the Matter of the Suspension)

of the Educator Certificate of)

Carolyn Smith)

Certificate 175371)

ORDER OF SUSPENSION

SUMMARY OF THE CASE

The South Carolina State Board of Education (State Board) considered this matter on January 11, 2006. On September 21, 2005, the State Department of Education (Department) sent Carolyn Smith a notice of her right to a hearing regarding the possible suspension of her South Carolina educator certificate by certified mail, return receipt requested, delivery restricted to addressee. Ms. Smith received the notice as evidenced by her telephone conversation with Jack Singletary of the Office of Educator Certification on September 27, 2005. Ms. Smith did not request a hearing within the time frame specified in the notice letter. On November 2, 2005, Ms. Smith contacted Mellanie Jinnette of the Office of Finance to request the opportunity to enter into a payment plan. Ms. Jinnette provided Ms. Smith with a payment plan agreement, but Ms. Smith failed to sign and return the agreement and failed to make any payments. After considering the evidence presented, the State Board voted to suspend Ms. Smith's certificate until she repays her outstanding loan with the State of South Carolina obtained through the Center for Teacher Education, Recruitment, Retention and Advancement (CERRA).

FINDINGS OF FACT

Ms. Smith holds a valid certificate and has over eleven years of teaching experience. On July 17, 2001, Ms. Smith signed a promissory note with the State of South Carolina to obtain a loan of \$2300 to pay for the costs of applying for certification from the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards

(NBPTS). One of the terms of that agreement was that Ms. Smith agreed to repay the \$2300 if she did not properly withdraw from the NBPTS process, nor submit the required portfolio to NBPTS, within the specified time frames. Ms. Smith did neither and has not repaid the \$2300. CERRA and the State Department of Education sent several letters to Ms. Smith informing her that the \$2300 was now due and of the consequences for failing to repay the amount due.

CONCLUSIONS OF LAW

The State Board may suspend the certificate of any person for unprofessional conduct. S.C. Code Ann. §§ 59-25-150 and 160 (2004). The State Board finds that there is sufficient evidence supporting its decision to suspend Ms. Smith's certificate 175371 from the date of this Order until she has satisfied her financial obligation in the amount of \$2300 to the State of South Carolina, as established in the loan agreement referenced above. Upon payment of the \$2,300.00, if Ms. Smith wishes to have her certificate reinstated, she may make a written request for reinstatement to the Office of Educator Certification of the Department of Education.

South Carolina State Board of Education

By: /S/ Joe Isaac
Joe Isaac, Chair

Columbia, South Carolina
January 11, 2006